DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 447 440 CS 014 137

TITLE	Report of the NEA Task Force on Reading, 2000.
INSTITUTION	National Education Association, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	2000-02-12
NOTE	31p.
AVAILABLE FROM	For full text: http://www.nea.org/readingmatters/expert/tfrfinal.pdf.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Evaluative (142)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Educational Policy; Educational Practices; Elementary Secondary Education; *Literacy; *Reading Instruction; *Reading Processes; Teacher Role
IDENTIFIERS	Educational Issues; National Education Association

ABSTRACT

The National Education Association (NEA) is committed to high achievement for all students and recognizes that the United States has far too many students who read but do not read well enough to meet the high standards set for students or to function in the world. Debates about the best way to teach reading are not new, but the intense politicization of reading instruction is a relatively new development. This report consists of a comprehensive set of guidelines, based on both research and promising practice, aimed at helping NEA members as they plan instruction, select programs and materials, and influence state and local policy related to reading. The task force which developed the report are all outstanding teachers who have received recognition for their expertise and commitment. After a preface, the report contains the following sections: Reading from the Perspective of Expert Teachers; Guidelines for Effective Reading Instruction; and Action and Policy Recommendations. The first appendix contains a synthesis of the initial task force discussions, and considerations based on the knowledge of expert teachers and supported by research. The second appendix contains excerpts from "Teachers Take Charge of Their Learning: Transforming Professional Development for Student Success" published in 1996 by the NEA Foundation for the Improvement of Education. (Contains 50 references.) (NKA)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 447 440

G. Felton

2A

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Report of the NEA Task Force on Reading 2000

Submitted to and adopted by the NEA Board of Directors, February 12, 2000

1. Preface 2

2. Reading from the Perspective of Expert Teachers 4

3. Guidelines for Effective Reading Instruction 7

4. Action and Policy Recommendations 13

5. References and Resources 14

6. Appendix I 18

7. Appendix II 25

CS 014 137

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

1. Preface

The NEA is committed to high achievement for all students and recognizes that this country has far too many students who read but do not read well enough to meet the high standards we have set for our students or to function in the world (Donahue et al. 1999). All but the most severely limited students should be able readers. NEA members have expressed the desire for NEA assistance in order to develop the capacity and receive the resources and support to make all students successful readers. In July 1999, delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly proposed and passed a New Business Item at the Representative Assembly directing NEA to add teachers' voices to those of other experts by establishing a task force of teachers to develop guidelines for NEA members on reading instruction:

> *That an NEA task force be formed to develop comprehensive guidelines on the teaching of reading. Members of the task force shall include Association members with classroom expertise in the teaching of reading. The task force will draw upon the International Reading Association, the National Council of Teachers of English, and additional literacy groups who contribute to the identification and/or implementation of effective practices in reading instruction.*
>
> *NBI 1999-18*

The task force first met in October 1999 and was given the following charge by NEA President Bob Chase:

> *The NEA Task Force on Reading will develop a set of comprehensive guidelines for NEA members related to reading instruction. The guidelines, based on both research and promising practice, will help members as they plan instruction, select programs and materials, and influence state and local policy related to reading. The guidelines will reflect the diversity of NEA's members and their concerns. In addition, the guidelines can inform NEA efforts to develop products and policies at a national level. The Task Force will draw on the knowledge and resources of national literacy education groups such as the International Reading Association and the National Council of Teachers of English as it frames its guidance.*

The highly qualified members of the task force are all outstanding teachers who have received recognition for their expertise and commitment. They offer this report as a potential basis for NEA policy and planning related to reading.

Members of the NEA Task Force on Reading:

Keith Armour
Second grade teacher in Title I school, Ohio
Past president of local reading council

Andy Baumgartner
Kindergarten teacher, Georgia
1999 National Teacher of the Year

Cathy Powers Forbes
Classroom teacher for 22 years (7 years in first grade, 15 years in second grade), North Carolina
National Board Certified Teacher, 1998

Janice James
Teacher of grades 1-3 multilevel classes
1999 Kentucky Teacher of the Year

Michael Johnson
President, New Jersey Education Association
Works with teachers to shape policy related to reading in New Jersey

Ginny Kalish
Second grade bilingual teacher
1999 Arizona Teacher of the Year

Greg Kurek
Sixth grade language arts teacher, Michigan
International Reading Association board member

Geri Marshall
Middle school reading teacher, Nebraska
Doctoral candidate in education, curriculum and instruction

Carolyn Olson
Reading and language arts specialist, Washington
Winner of Christa McAuliffe Award

Robin Nettinga
Junior high/middle school English and reading teacher
President, Idaho Education Association

Becky Pringle, Task Force Chair
Eighth grade science teacher, Pennsylvania
Member of NEA Board of Directors

NEA Staff Assisting the Task Force on Reading:
Linda Cornwell
Barbara Kapinus
Ann McLaren
Barbara Yentzer
Bronna Zlochiver

2. Reading from the Perspective of Expert Teachers

The field of reading instruction is rich in conflicting theories and approaches, although the current controversies are not new. Indeed, much relevant research is not particularly new either. Now, as in the past, research results are often conflicting and lead to diverse instructional programs based on those results.

The debates about the best ways to teach reading have been taking place for almost a century. In spite of current reports, based on reviews of research, that both whole language activities and phonics activities contribute to reading success, experts and policy makers continue to argue about the proportion of instructional time to be given to specific types of reading activities and the sequence of instructional activities. But amid all the discussion by special panels of experts and statements by policy makers, the voices of teachers—the people whose expertise is based on real teaching experiences in real classrooms—are not usually heard.

While reading debates are not new, the intense politicization of reading instruction is a relatively recent development. The implementation of specific approaches to reading has been claimed by some political groups as part of their agenda. Constituents of other groups view that agenda as an effort to disenfranchise teachers and students. In the midst of the rhetoric and intense feeling generated by both sides, it is difficult to set an unbiased, apolitical course. Some have tried to stake out a middle ground by calling for a "balanced" approach to reading. Unfortunately, this stance promotes the notion of only two competing aspects to reading instruction. It leaves open the possibility of criticism for placing the fulcrum for the "balance" too much to one side or the other.

It would be beneficial to take a different stance that moves beyond the debate. A focus on *complete* reading programs could offer such a stance. The promotion of complete reading programs would include recognition of several critical aspects of reading achievement.

1. A complete reading program includes the development of language and thinking skills as well as phonemic awareness; phonics; decoding; word recognition; comprehension; positive reading habits and attitudes; vocabulary; and a sense of the organization of texts such as stories, articles, and reports. All are essential to addressing all the components in the early stages of literacy learning.

2. A complete reading program addresses reading as one of several aspects of literacy. Others include listening, speaking, writing, using information from text, and responding thoughtfully and critically to text.

3. A complete reading program builds on the cultural and linguistic diversity that students bring to the classroom and enables all students to understand and appreciate cultural diversity.

4. A complete reading program provides for the reading success of all students, including those with special needs. Materials and instruction are adapted to accommodate those students.

5. A complete reading program involves *all* of the child's teachers, including parents and resources in the community providing language development and models of the importance of reading.

6. A complete reading program provides teachers with the instructional and assessment tools to plan and deliver to each student the instructional activities that best support that individual's achieving a high level of reading proficiency.

7. A complete reading program aims to raise the achievement of all students. Therefore, it must be flexible in meeting the needs of all students. This might entail more instructional time for some students and more access to books for others. It might emphasize more opportunities to develop thinking skills related to reading for some students while providing more opportunities to develop fluency for others.

8. A complete reading program acknowledges that reading, like all cognitive skills, is linked to the physical well-being of children. That well-being starts before birth with sound prenatal care and continues with healthcare for preschoolers as well as school-age children. It involves parents having adequate knowledge about providing for their children's health and development.

9. A complete reading program is built on a wide range of significant research and thinking related to both the theory and practice of reading instruction. Significant research and thinking includes experimental studies; descriptive studies; case studies (a realistic way to conduct research on whole school programs); meta analyses of research; and reasonable, reflective writings on theory and best practice. While some advocate using only experimental research in planning reading programs, doing so eliminates important contributions to the understanding of how children develop language and reading skills. For example, Piaget and Vygotsky, two influential contributors to the understanding of learning in young children, did no experimental studies.

10. A complete reading program incorporates findings of research related to several factors in reading, not just a limited set of skills. Beginning readers, for example, need to learn about the structure of stories and sentences as well as word structure of words, which means that research in those areas is important. Another area of relevant research involves the variety of characteristics of materials used with beginning readers. Recent research, such as that on the importance of young students having access to classroom libraries of rich, multilevel reading materials, should also be considered.

As suggested here, a complete reading program has several components that contribute in varying ratios to the achievement of literacy. It is analogous in several ways to a balanced diet. Completeness in both diet and reading is achieved by providing diverse components

in ratios that are not necessarily equal. In addition, the ratios might vary with individual needs and with development. For example, infants do not eat five servings of fruits and vegetables as recommended for children and adults. In a similar fashion, beginning readers might require different amounts of certain types of reading activities than more proficient readers. Just as some infants do not do well on milk products and need special formulae, so beginning readers may have special instructional needs.

Advocating a complete reading program addresses all the factors involved in literacy achievement and supports the understanding that there is no one-size-fits-all answer to the successful teaching of reading.

3. Guidelines for Effective Reading Instruction

The NEA Task Force on Reading and many other reading experts agree on three points:

1. There is no one way to teach reading that works for all children all the time.
2. The teacher, not the method, makes the real difference in reading success.
3. Teachers cannot do the job without the support of the community and good policy. These points are essential underpinnings to the guidelines developed by the NEA task force.

The following guidelines are offered to teachers, parents, policy makers, and the public for use in planning, implementing, and monitoring the effectiveness of complete reading programs. They address instruction that should take place within a setting that provides:

- reading achievement for all students;
- guidance in selecting and developing programs and materials;
- time, resources, and professional development for planning instruction;
- policies that promote complete reading programs.

Selecting and Developing Programs and Materials

There is no one method for successfully teaching reading to all students. Programs must be responsive to the diverse strengths, needs, backgrounds, interests, and ways of learning that students bring to school.

a. Reading programs should allow teachers to be flexible in the informed use of a repertoire of instructional approaches.

b. Reading programs should involve schoolwide planning and implementation, including:

- coordination of timely interventions for struggling readers;
- connections between reading and other content areas;
- continuous monitoring and teacher involvement in decision making;
- allocation of resources, including staff time and funds.

c. Every classroom should have a library of materials that is large and diverse enough to provide daily opportunities for students to read self-selected materials. In addition,

every school should have a fully funded library/media center that meets the highest of state and/or national standards and a licensed, full-time librarian/media specialist.

d. Classroom materials should:

- be engaging;
- address a range of reading interests and levels;
- allow for student choice and success;
- include nonfiction as well as fiction;
- support teacher choice and flexibility;
- be of good quality.

e. The development and implementation of schoolwide reading programs should include the collective, systematic input of school communities, including parents and policy makers.

f. Decisions about the design, selection, and implementation of reading programs should be informed by a range of significant research and thinking; assessment results, including samples of student work and teacher observations of students; the needs of the community; and the experiences of successful teachers.

g. Teacher organizations and schools should develop communication with families/caregivers about ways they all can support children's reading success.

Planning Instruction

Reading instruction should promote continuous improvement as well as achievement of comprehensive standards by all students.

a. Reading programs should be complete. They should include instructional activities that:

- reflect essential connections among reading, writing, listening, and speaking;
- address all aspects of reading, including knowledge, skills, attitudes, and habits;
- provide requisite instruction and opportunities for all students to improve at all levels, preK-12;
- involve the wider community beyond the school.

b. Reading instruction should develop language and thinking skills as well as phonemic awareness; phonics; decoding; word recognition; comprehension; positive reading

habits and attitudes; vocabulary; and a sense of the organization of texts such as stories, articles, and reports.

c. Reading instruction should support student independence by providing opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills with materials that match their abilities and interests.

d. Instruction and classroom resources must be flexible and rich enough to provide for individualization.

- Strategies and materials should address the needs of all student populations—those with special learning needs, those whose first language is not English, and those who have advanced skills and knowledge.
- Reading instruction and materials should be sensitive to and supportive of students from culturally diverse backgrounds.
- Students need choices, as well as structure and guidance, in both reading-related activities and in what they read.

e. Where possible, beginning reading instruction should be in the language in which students are most proficient (Snow, Burns, and Griffin 1998), with the goal always that students catch up as soon as possible with peers who are reading in English.

f. Students must have sufficient time to practice and apply reading skills so that they can read and respond to reading tasks fluently.

g. Students at all grade and age levels must have time to read independently in order to explore a variety of genres and materials, address personal interests, develop extensive vocabularies, and acquire the habit of reading for personal pleasure.

h. Reading aloud to students at all levels must be an essential component of complete reading programs in order to model and foster appreciation of reading, demonstrate fluency, and share materials and ideas.

i. Teachers must have manageable class sizes in order for individual students to receive the attention, instruction, and practice necessary for success. They also need the assistance of support personnel and specialists.

j. Effective interventions to help struggling readers must be connected to the regular curriculum in reading. Intervention strategies should enable all students to maintain access to essential parts of both the reading curriculum and the curriculum in other content areas.

k. Teachers must have sufficient time to plan and deliver effective instruction based on student needs.

l. A complete reading program should be aligned with standards and assessments but not necessarily limited to what is prescribed, especially when standards or assessments are narrow in scope.

Developing National, State, and Local Policy

Policy related to reading should promote optimal achievement by all students, sound practice, a range of research, and support for teachers as informed practitioners.

Teacher Quality

a. Teachers should be engaged in ongoing professional development related to instruction in complete reading programs. They need to understand and be able to apply:

- linguistic, cognitive, and developmental aspects of learning to read and to use text;
- assessment tools for diagnosing instructional needs and demonstrating achievement;
- instructional approaches to reading that are linked to diagnosed strengths and weakness and that will address the diverse needs of students;
- instructional approaches for fostering positive reading attitudes and habits;
- approaches to working with parents to extend the support for students' reading growth.

b. All teachers (preK –12) must understand and be able to teach the reading skills and knowledge necessary for learning in the content areas they teach.

c. Professional development should be timely and ongoing, and should have the characteristics of effective staff development indicated in the report of the National Foundation for the Improvement of Education, *Teachers Take Charge of Their Learning*. (See Appendix II.)

d. Preservice teacher education programs should provide opportunities for teacher candidates to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to begin to implement complete reading programs.

e. New teachers must receive support from mentors and fellow teachers as well as ongoing professional development, in order to effectively implement complete reading programs.

f. Teachers must have time to collaborate, share ideas and resources, and mentor new teachers.

g. Because many educational personnel have roles in building students' reading proficiency, teachers must be skilled in working collaboratively with librarian/media specialists, paraprofessionals, classroom assistants, and specialists.

h. Graduate level education programs in reading should provide opportunities for experienced teachers to further refine their skills in implementing reading programs by building upon their acquired knowledge and competencies.

Instructional Support

i. Teachers must have:

- the freedom to exercise their professional judgement in deciding how to meet the instructional needs of students;
- the tools and data to determine those needs;
- time to make thoughtful decisions about instruction based on evidence of student achievement.

i. Teachers at all levels must have optimal class sizes that allow them to teach reading effectively to all students. For example, research suggests the optimal size for primary classrooms to be between 15 and 18 students.

j. Student standards must promote realistic goals, sound curriculum, effective instruction, allocation of adequate resources, policy and assessment alignment, and systemic approaches to improving reading achievement.

k. Because reading is essential for a high level of proficiency in all academic pursuits, all education professionals need to know how to help students become proficient readers.

l. Personnel supporting teachers in classrooms should receive the professional development they need in order to be effective in assisting teachers and students.

Standards

m. Standards for reading content and performance should provide a vision of attainable goals for all those involved in education, from policy makers to parents.

n. Standards should reflect learning and skills that are appropriate for the age group(s) they address.

o. Standards should be developed using the expertise of teachers as well as that of a range of researchers and theorists.

p. Standards should support flexibility in planning instruction.

Assessment

q. Assessments must be valid indicators of achievement in a range of reading skills and should only be used for the purposes for which they are appropriate. The purposes of assessment include:

- diagnosing and planning instruction;
- marking progress of students and evaluating the effectiveness of instruction and programs;
- accountability for policy makers, schools, teachers, parents, communities, and students.

r. Assessment should take place after there has been sufficient time for instruction and should not replace instructional time.

s. Assessment and policy related to reading instruction must be aligned with standards and effective classroom practice. They should support rich curriculum and sound instruction rather than limiting instructional possibilities.

t. Multiple indicators of achievement should be used to make decisions about programs and instruction.

Collaboration and Communication

u. Efforts to improve reading achievement should promote collaboration among teachers, other school personnel, parents, students, and policy makers, not competition among individuals, organizations, theories, or political factions.

v. Teacher organizations and every public school should communicate the complexities and challenges of teaching reading, as well as the successes, to parents and policy makers.

w. Policy makers must take responsibility for making decisions about resources and guidelines that support effective programs and instruction. They need to consider whether or not research or data suggest that their decisions are working.

4. Action and Policy Recommendations

Action Recommendations

1. That NEA disseminate the report of the NEA Task Force on Reading 2000 with and through like-minded organizations at the national and state levels, and specifically introduce the report to and use it with appropriate intergovernmental organizations (e.g., the Education Commission of the States, the National Conference of State Legislatures).

2. That NEA disseminate the report of the NEA Task Force on Reading 2000 in forms appropriate for building community and policy maker understanding that reading is the key gateway to student achievement.

3. That NEA include working attention to the guidelines of the NEA Task Force on Reading 2000 in such future events as regional leadership conferences, the NEA National Conference, and pre-Representative Assembly meetings.

4. That NEA develop and disseminate resources—including technology-based products—for teachers that foster improved reading instruction for all the diverse populations of students.

5. That NEA develop and disseminate resources to help educators select and implement effective reading programs.

6. That NEA prepare resources to help state affiliates examine state reading policies, identify areas that do not reflect real needs of teachers or the guidelines of the NEA Task Force on Reading 2000, and craft appropriate action plans.

7. That NEA use March 3, 2000, the day after Read Across America, to promote the report of the NEA Task Force on Reading 2000, e.g., by suggesting to affiliates how to put the report to use in substantive ways.

Policy Recommendation

8. That NEA, upon adoption of an NEA position statement on effective reading instruction, review and revise existing NEA policy as necessary.

5. References and Resources

Bond, G. L., and R. Dykstra. 1967.The cooperative research program in first-grade reading instruction. *Reading Research Quarterly* 2: 1–142.

Bredekamp, Sue, and Teresa Rosegrant, eds. 1995. *Reaching potentials: Transforming early childhood curriculum and assessment*, Vol. 2. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Burns, M. Susan, Peg Griffin, and Catherine E. Snow, eds. 1999. *Starting out right: A guide to promoting children's reading success*. Washington, D.C.: National Research Council.

Carson, Shirley A. 1999. A veteran enters the reading wars: My journal. *The Reading Teacher* 53, no. 3: 212–224.

Collier, Virginia P. 1995. Acquiring a second language for school. *Directions in Language & Education*. http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/ncbepubs/directions/04.htm (10 November 1999).

Davis, Hazel, James E. Davis, et al. N.d. *Defining and defending: Instructional methods*. Urbana, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English.

Donahue, Patricia L., Kristin E. Voelkl, Jay R. Campbell, and John Mazzeo. March 1999. *NAEP 1998 reading report card for the nation and the states*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

Ducharme, Mary K., Barbara L. Licklider, William A. Matthes, and Rachel A. Vannatta. N.d. Conceptual and analysis criteria: A process for identifying quality educational research. *The Fine Foundation's FineLink*, no. 1. N. p.: The Fine Foundation.

Flippo, Rona F. 1999. Redefining the reading wars: The war against reading researchers. *Educational Leadership* (October): 38–41.

Fox, Dennis. N.d. Using data in the classroom—Participant materials. Reading Success Network. N.p.: Southern California Comprehensive Assistance Center.

Gee, James Paul. 1999. Critical issues: Reading and the new literacy studies: Reframing the National Academy of Sciences report on reading. *Journal of Literacy Research* 31, no. 3: 355–374.

Heath, Shirley Brice. 1993. *Inner city life through drama: Imagining the language classroom*. http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/miscpubs/tesol/tesolquarterly/heath.htm (19 July 1999).

International Reading Association. 1999. A collection of papers presented at the Reading Research '99 Conference: Good teachers = good readers. San Diego: Author.

———. 1999. High stakes testing. http://www.reading.org/advocacy/policies/high_stakes.html. (9 November 1999).

———. 1998. *Phonemic awareness and the teaching of reading: A position statement from the Board of Directors of the International Reading Association*. Newark, Del.: Author.

———. 1997. *The role of phonics in reading instruction: A position statement of the International Reading Association*. Newark, Del.: Author.

International Reading Association and National Association for the Education of Young Children. 1998. *Learning to read and write: Developmentally appropriate practices for young children, a joint position statement*. Newark, Del.: Author.

Jiménez, Robert T., Luis C. Moll, Flora V. Rodriquez-Brown, and Rosalinda B. Barrera. 1999. Latina and Latino researchers interact on issues related to literacy learning. *Reading Research Quarterly* 34, no. 2: 217–227.

Joyce, Bruce R. 1999. Reading about reading: Notes from a consumer to the scholars of literacy. *The Reading Teacher* 52, no. 7: 662–671.

Learning First Alliance. June, 1998. *Every child reading*. Washington, D.C.: Author.

———. N.d. Professional development for the improvement of early reading instruction: Guidelines for evaluation of programs (embargoed). N.p.: Author.

McQuillan, Jeff. 1998. *Seven myths about literacy in the United States*. http://www.ericae.net/digests/tm9808.htm (12 May 1999).

Moore, David W. 1997. Questions of balance. *Reading Research Quarterly* 32, no. 2: 212–215.

Mulhern, Margaret, Flora V. Rodriguez-Brown, and Timothy Shanahan. 1994. Family literacy for language minority families: Issues for program implementation. *NCBE Program Information Guide Series*, no. 17. http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/ncbepubs/pigs/pig17.htm (10 November 1999).

National Association for the Education of Young Children and International Reading Association. 1988. NAEYC position statement on standardized testing of young children 3 through 8 years of age. *Young Children* 43, no. 2: 42–47.

———. 1998. *Raising a reader, raising a writer: How parents can help*. Washington, D.C.: Author.

National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. September 1996. *What matters most: Teaching for America's future*. New York: Author.

National Council of Teachers of English. n.d. *Defining and defending instructional methods*. Urbana, Ill: Author.

National Education Association. 1999. Teaching reading. *Teaching and Change: Special Sample Issue*. Washington, D.C.: Author and Corwin Press, Inc.

National Education Association and Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement. 1999. *Reading matters bookmark and poster*. Washington, D.C.: Authors.

National Foundation for the Improvement of Education. 1996. *Teachers take charge of their learning: Transforming professional development for student success*. Washington, D.C.: Author. http://www.nfie.org/takechar.htm. (4 December 1998).

New Standards Primary Literacy Committee. 1999. *Reading and writing grade by grade: Primary literacy standards for kindergarten through third grade*. Pittsburgh, Penn.: National Center for Education and the Economy.

Pearson, David P. 1985. Changing the face of reading comprehension instruction. *Ginn Occasional Papers: Writings in reading and language arts, a series from Silver, Burdett and Ginn*, No. 21.

Pellerano, Cristina, Sandra H. Fradd, and Lourdes Rovira. 1998. Coral Way elementary school: A success story in bilingualism and biliteracy. *Discover*. http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/ncbepubs/discover/03coral.htm (10 November 1999).

Phi Delta Kappa.1997. The 29th annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup poll of the public's attitudes toward the public schools. http://www.pdkintl.org/kappan/kpoll97d.htm (25 August 1997.

Polidori, Jack. 1999. *Reading survey of state affiliates*. NEA internal memorandum. Washington, D.C.: National Education Association.

Pressley, Michael, Richard Allington, et al. 1998. First-grade teachers who build strong readers and writers (poster). Albany, N.Y.: The National Research Center on English Learning & Achievement.

———. 1998. *The nature of effective first-grade literacy instruction*. http://cela.albany.edu/1stgradelit/literacy.html (1 June 1999).

Prince, Cynthia D., and Leslie A. Lawrence. 1993. School readiness and language minority students: Implications of the first national education goal. *NCBE FOCUS: Occasional Papers in Bilingual Education*, no. 7. http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/ncbepubs/focus/focus7.htm (10 November 1999).

Raudenbush, Stephen W., Yuk Fai Cheong, and Randall P. Foitu. 1996. Social inequality, social segregation, and their relationship to reading literacy in 22 countries. In

Reading literacy in an international perspective, edited by Marilyn Binkley, Keith Rust, and Trevor Williams. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

Renyi, Judith. 1996. Executive summary to *Teachers take charge of their learning: Transforming professional development for student success*. Washington, D.C.: The National Foundation for the Improvement of Education.

Shanahan, Timothy, and Susan B. Newman. 1997. Literacy research that makes a difference. *Reading Research Quarterly* 32, no. 2: 202–210.

Snow, Catherine E., M. Susan Burns, and Peg Griffin, eds. 1998. *Preventing reading difficulties in young children*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.

Stahl, Steven A. 1999. Why innovations come and go (and mostly go): The case of whole language. *Educational Researcher* 28, no. 8:13–22.

Sweet, Anne P. 1993. *State of the art: Ten transforming ideas for teaching and learning to read*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement.

Taylor, Barbara M., P. David Pearson, Kathleen F. Clark, and Sharon Walpole. 1999. *Beating the odds in teaching all children to read*. CIERA Report #2-006. Ann Arbor, Mich.: Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement.

Tierney, Robert J., and Timothy Shanahan. 1991. Research on the reading-writing relationship: interactions, transactions, and outcomes. In *Handbook of reading research, Vol. 2*., edited by Rebecca Barr, Michael Kamil, Peter Mosenthal, and P. David Pearson. New York: Longman.

Trumbull, Elise, Carrie Rothstein-Fisch, and Patricia M. Greenfield. N.d. Bridging cultures in our schools: New approaches that work. *Knowledge Brief*. N.p.: WestEd.

Wheaton, Craig, and Stephen Kay.1999. Every child will read—We guarantee it. *Educational Leadership* (October): 52–56.

6. Appendix I

A. Synthesis of the Initial Task Force Discussions

This section reflects some of the background discussions of the Reading Task Force and provides information on the issues and concerns that gave rise to this report.

Policy Problems

Policy is too often driven by myths about reading rather than the facts. One myth is that teachers are doing a miserable job of teaching students to read. Results of national and international assessments do not support this conclusion. In the 1991 international assessment of reading, the United States ranked at the top, with only students from Finland achieving a higher mean score (Raudenbush et al. 1996). However, large populations are not being reached, and that definitely needs to be addressed. Black and Hispanic students often lag behind whites and Asians in reading achievement (Donahue et al. 1999). The needs of these students must be met so that all students will become highly skilled readers.

Another myth currently driving policy related to reading is that there is one simple thing that can be done or one perfect program that can be bought that will teach all students to read well. Over 30 years ago, a set of studies of first grade classrooms found that it is the teacher, not the method, that matters most in reading instruction (Bond and Dykstra 1967). No new research has refuted this finding. Reading is a complex activity with many components, and learning to read is rendered more complex by diversity among students in their backgrounds and in the ways they learn best.

Policy makers who propose one approach to reading instruction have not addressed how to meet the needs of students whose cultural and language backgrounds are diverse. The one-size-fits-all approach is certainly not designed for dealing with diversity. Even within a specific culture or community, students have various ways of learning that affect the effectiveness of specific reading methods.

A third myth that propels policy is the idea that setting standards and implementing assessments that have high stakes for teachers and students are the keys to improving reading achievement. Policy makers have proposed rigorous standards and assessments to set goals for reading instruction and determine how well students are learning to read. This development has the potential to provide focus for instruction but also can constrain it or make it almost unmanageable. One problem is that some standards are too limited, covering only some of the important aspects of reading; others are too specific or rigid, leaving no room for individual differences.

Inappropriate assessments are a greater source of difficulties for teachers and students than standards. Some assessments tap only a small portion of the skills and knowledge needed for reading success. Some tests even use tasks that contradict good instructional

practice. Some tests are being used that are not appropriate for certain age groups. For example, a large group—paper and pencil tests— should not be mandated for children below grade 3 (NAEYC 1988; Bredekamp and Rosegrant 1992). When teachers and students are held accountable using sound assessments, they have clear and laudable goals. When they are held accountable on inappropriate assessments, they are constrained and misdirected in scope and emphasis. The problem is worse when the assessments are not aligned with the standards. In that case, teachers are directed by standards to teach one set of things in the classroom but are held accountable on an assessment either for a small part of the standards or for something not even addressed in the standards. Even when assessments are sound, teachers find themselves spending an inordinate amount of time preparing students for the assessments rather than delivering a complete curriculum that prepares students to use reading as a tool in the classroom and beyond school.

An additional problem is that policy makers and educational administrators misuse the data from large-scale assessments. There are lots of reasons for poor test scores, but policy often assumes connections that are not supported by the data. A case in point is that one state recently legislated a very rigid approach to reading based on low reading scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). However, there are no data to suggest that the new program has any relationship to performance on items such as those on the NAEP. Test scores are also misused to make comparisons among classrooms, schools, and districts that are not equal in resources and support.

Policy tends to provide directives for teachers but little support in the form of rich opportunities for professional development, reasonable class sizes, resources for helping special and diverse students, and additional instructional time for students who need it. Some policy makers seem to be using reading as an issue for political gain, proposing simplistic, yet seductive, solutions to complex problems. Too often sound bites become policy, rather than thoughtful actions that support the complex task of teaching reading. This adds to the burden of teachers who are already trying hard to do their best even when support does not appear to be there for them. Teachers and students are held accountable for the success of education—but not the policy makers whose directives on curriculum, funding, time use, and school support can make education successful or doom it to failure.

Because of these policy problems, teachers find themselves struggling to use what they know from experience works with students and also to meet all the requirements set by policy, standards, and assessment. They try to help each individual student become an effective reader in spite of constraints and lack of support and resources. In response to the pressures of testing and policies, reading instruction is regressing in some areas to meaningless drills and one-size-fits-all, simplistic programs, in spite of expert teachers' knowledge to the contrary. When this happens, some students actually are less likely to receive the instruction they need for reading success than if the simplistic programs were not adopted.

Another harmful effect of the emphasis on assessments is that curriculum is being pushed down to inappropriate levels. For example, children in kindergarten are being asked to do what research suggests is more appropriate for second graders. Because time stays

constant as new things are introduced into the curriculum, the problem is made worse by the dropping of important activities that are part of building the foundations for learning.

Classroom Challenges

Many problems that could be addressed by policy are played out in classrooms. One of these is time. Over and over, teachers say that there is not enough time. Because many classes are too large, there is not enough time to get to know the instructional needs of individual students and what works best for them. There is not enough time to plan for all the things required by policy and meet the individual needs of diverse students.

Another problem is flexibility. Teachers are not given the flexibility or the knowledge/skills to meet the instructional needs of diverse students. They are often told only one approach should be used, or *x* minutes should be devoted to an aspect of reading that some students have already mastered, while others are not yet ready to learn it. Such a highly rigid, specified curriculum eliminates teachers' opportunities to build an increasingly sophisticated repertoire of strategies for improving the reading achievement of all students. Where inflexibility is a characteristic of a policy-driven reading curriculum, it is often non-educators and those who do not work with students regularly who are influencing what goes on in classrooms, rather than teachers whose classroom experiences make them experts.

Teachers lack adequate resources. Classroom materials and school libraries are often not sufficient for promoting good reading habits and meeting the needs and interests of diverse students. Research has shown that classrooms where students do a lot of reading on their own, as well as having stories read to them, are more effective in building successful readers (Pressley, Allington, et al. 1998; Taylor, Pearson, et al. 1999). However, many classrooms do not have enough reading materials available to provide for the different reading levels and interests of students. All too often, the classrooms that most need these materials because students do not have access to them at home are the very classrooms that lack them.

In addition to lacking materials of sufficient flexibility and diversity to help all students, some teachers lack the time and the tools to carefully diagnose the instructional needs of students. They find themselves using results of large-scale assessments that are not designed to provide in-depth information on individual students. As a result, some students fall through the cracks, and others simply mark time because instruction is not well planned to meet their needs.

Professional Development Issues

Teachers need the opportunity to continually upgrade their knowledge and skills. Their needs are similar to the professional capacity needs of people in other fields such as medicine, technology, and science. As in those fields, a degree gives individuals the knowledge and skills to begin practicing their profession, but continuing advances in the field require continuous learning. In other fields, professionals are in charge of their

professional development. They choose what they believe will be useful learning experiences. In contrast, teachers are seldom offered options and are often required to sit through hours of presentations on topics that are not relevant to their professional needs. With time and resources for achieving reading success already limited, this is a huge waste. Professional development activities must be relevant and in depth if they are going to have a positive impact on reading instruction.

Currently, in many places, typical staff development in reading might consist of two sessions, three hours long, on different, unrelated topics. In other places, the continuous quest for the one way to make all students successful readers has a negative impact on professional development programs. Teachers in these situations are required to sit through training, not the same thing as professional development, on techniques that may not be at all appropriate for their students. One result of poor staff development is that teachers who perceive a lack of faith in their expertise, or who lack control over instruction, are likely to be less confident in how they approach their task of teaching.

New teachers are often given the most difficult classes in the most challenging schools (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, September 1996). They are seldom given support or mentors. Too often they feel like someone who has just received a first driver's license and is asked to drive a winding mountain road in the snow. Driving school cannot really prepare drivers for all the possible hazards they will encounter. Experience over time and advice from seasoned drivers are also necessary. So it is with new teachers. College seldom prepares them for all the experiences they will encounter in their classrooms but over time, and with help, they can develop knowledge and skills to be highly effective teachers. They need mentoring and support as they assume the weighty responsibility of managing entire classes of students in new and unique school environments.

Support for Public Schools

Teachers often work for lower salaries than most professionals do, for long hours, and shabby buildings. They see, in the news and in proceedings of policy groups, evidence of a lack of faith in their ability to teach well. Some of this lack of faith arises from the fact that few parents and policy makers are aware of how classrooms and the needs of students have changed in the last decade. They are not aware of the complexity of teaching reading and the diversity of research findings related to reading instruction. Students today are very different from students 30 or 40 years ago. Life is more complex today, as are today's students—and as is the teaching of reading.

Most parents report that they are actually satisfied with the schools their children attend. It is the schools they do not really know well, where other people's children go, that they believe need improvement (Phi Delta Kappa 1997). Students would be better served if parents and policy makers would base decisions and opinions about education on facts and substantiated evidence, rather than hunches or media misinformation.

B. Considerations Based on the Knowledge of Expert Teachers and Supported by Research

Optimal Contexts for Reading Success/Best Practice

The goal of reading instruction is for every student to become and remain an adept reader capable of clear and critical thinking about what is read. Reading programs should be driven by the needs of students, not by arbitrary time allotments based on theory or expediency. Because sound classroom practice provides for individual differences while supporting high achievement for all students, reading programs should reflect what is appropriate for the range of students' development in every classroom. Effective reading programs include continuous assessment of student progress that informs instruction.

Students need a complete reading program. The concept of a complete reading program is more useful than the concept of a balanced one, because it promotes multiple aspects of reading instruction rather than just two. A complete reading program should be defined in terms of the needs of students. The decision-making ability of teachers who work with students is crucial in developing such a program. No one set of materials or single approved program is sufficient for providing a complete reading program for every student. In a complete reading program, teachers need the knowledge and freedom to adapt and augment programs and materials to meet the needs of their particular students.

Complete reading programs should provide a schoolwide plan that includes effective interventions at all grade levels to ensure reading success for all students. Interventions for struggling readers should be provided in addition to classroom instruction, not as a replacement for it.

Purposeful attention should be given to reading development throughout the K-12 curriculum. There is no grade level at which opportunities to learn to read should cease to be provided for students. There is also no grade level at which the reading aloud of rich texts to students cannot contribute to the understanding of written language, the development of concepts, and the motivation to read, all of which improve reading achievement (Snow, Burns, and Griffin 1998).

Reading cannot be taught in isolation. It has links to writing and oral language development (Tierney and Shanahan 1991; Pressley, Allington, et al. 1998), as well as to the ability to learn in other areas such as social studies. Skills are not the only component of reading achievement; critical thinking, positive attitudes toward reading, and frequent, habitual reading are also important (New Standards Primary Literacy Committee 1999).

Reading programs need to build on the language and culture of each student. Oral language development is a critical prerequisite and an ongoing factor in reading success. Where possible, beginning reading instruction should be in the language in which students are most proficient (Snow, Burns, and Griffin 1998), with the goal always being to have students catch up as soon as possible with their peers who are reading in English. Where reading instruction in the primary language is not possible, reading instruction

should not be delayed but should proceed in a manner that enables students to develop proficiency in English while they are learning to read.

Learning to read should be enjoyable, attractive, and developmentally appropriate. Powerful learning experiences involve engagement, choices, success, and personal connections. Students need both direct instruction and the time and resources to apply their reading skills and knowledge while exploring their interests and tastes in reading.

Support for Effective Instruction in Reading

Time is a critical factor in all aspects of a successful reading program. Teachers need to be able to adjust instructional time for individual students. They need time for continuous diagnostic assessment, planning, and ongoing staff development. Students may need time in addition to the regular class day or school week/year for the necessary instruction and practice for reading success.

Teachers need more tools in their repertoires of instructional strategies. They also need opportunities to learn how to best use instructional strategies and time to decide when to use specific strategies. However, teachers should have a voice in their professional development. Like students, teachers who are continually learning better classroom approaches need choice, success, and relevance in their preservice and in-service education opportunities. Because teachers are good resources for each other, teachers need professional time to collaborate, learn, and plan with colleagues. New teachers need ongoing support from veteran teachers. Both new and veteran teachers need some freedom to try out promising new instructional approaches.

Support personnel need to be adequately prepared to help teachers and should be used to free teachers to work with students who are most in need of help with reading.

Assessment and Testing Practices

The ultimate purpose of assessment of any type is the provision of effective instruction. Results of large-scale accountability testing should be used to make decisions about providing additional help where needed, not just as a report card on teachers and schools. A single test score, especially on a test that taps a highly limited range of reading skills, should not be used to hold teachers and students accountable for achievement. Multiple indicators of progress should be considered in determining student achievement and program effectiveness. Teachers need to receive test results in time to use them in planning instruction, and they need the professional time to review and interpret results of district, state, and national assessments.

No one test can provide adequate information for accountability, diagnosis, evidence of individual growth, and evidence of program effectiveness. Consequently, teachers need a repertoire of tools for classroom diagnosis that offer information beyond what is provided by large-scale tests such as those used for accountability.

Teachers' input is essential in the development of standards and assessments, and in the selection of programs and materials that relate to standards and assessments at all levels. Feedback on the appropriateness and usefulness of standards and assessments should be sought from teachers.

Beyond the Classroom

Teachers cannot do the job of educating today's students alone. They need the support of parents and enlightened policy makers. Instead of unilateral directives framed by politicians or special interest groups, there should be more true discussion of possibilities for policy where teachers can weigh in.

Teachers should not be characterized as unwilling to improve when the real cause of lack of results is often a lack of substantive support. NEA can help teachers by educating the public about the challenges and complexity of teaching reading. NEA can provide strategies for involving parents in schooling activities so that they can contribute to students' reading success. NEA can also provide tools for working with policy makers on reading-related decisions.

7. Appendix II

Excerpted from *Teachers Take Charge of Their Learning: Transforming Professional Development for Student Success* (NFIE 1996)

Major Recommendations

Find Time to Build Professional Development into the Life of Schools

Teachers spend almost all of their school days and school year in direct contact with students. This time is precious and should not be reduced. Yet time for teachers to plan and review student work, mentor and observe other teachers, study, develop new programs and methods, hone leadership skills, and manage student learning and the work of the school is essential to good teaching in the classroom. Some of the ways to find time for this work include:

1. Flexible Scheduling

Reorganize time in the school day to enable teachers to work together as well as individually both daily and weekly and throughout the year.

2. Extended School Year for Teachers

Redefine the teaching job to include both direct student instructional time and blocks of extended time for teachers' professional development. Extend the length of the school year, allowing for up to four weeks for teachers' professional development while students are on vacation. Organize the teachers' year to include intensive, sustained study by staff as determined by school-based decisions directed toward increasing student learning. Intensive study should be supported by year-long follow-up.

Help Teachers to Assume Responsibility for Their Own Professional Development

In the past, teachers have been told what to do and given minimal tools with which to do it. Evaluating their performance was a matter of checking off a list of whether they did what they were told. In today's effective schools, however, teachers make important decisions about their own teaching and the school as a whole, know and understand child development and the children they teach, share responsibility for all the children in the school with their colleagues, and take part in building professional knowledge with their peers. Teachers' responsibilities have grown beyond the isolated classroom walls to embrace the success of all children and adults who work in the school. Expanded responsibilities entail teachers' assuming expanded roles.

To enhance student learning in modern schools means to practice high standards for teaching, to assist one's colleagues, and to be assisted in reaching and maintaining those standards. Some ways of achieving this level of professionalism include:

1. School-based Professional Development

Professional development in schools should be based on an analysis of the needs of students in those schools and should be consistent with the district's mission and professional standards.

2. Standards and Accountability

Professional development goals and plans should be decided locally by the school community of teachers, administrators, and parents. Standards for student learning and standards for professional practice should guide the design, conduct, and evaluation of professional development, and these standards should recognize and measure teachers' expanded roles.

3. Balancing Individual Teachers' and School Needs for Learning

Individual teachers should design their professional development plans to fulfill their schools' needs for expertise. Schools should recognize teachers' individual as well as whole faculty interests in pursuing professional development.

4. Peer Assistance and Review

Teachers should assume responsibility for their continued growth and effectiveness. Teachers and administrators should collaborate in each district to create peer assistance and review to nurture the practice of all teachers and to counsel out of teaching those who, after sustained assistance by their specially prepared peers, do not meet professional standards of practice.

5. Expanded Roles for Teachers

Teachers should study new instructional approaches, subject matter, and skills that enhance instruction, such as the use of information technologies, interpersonal and management skills, and skills for reaching out and including parents, business, and community resources in children's learning. Teachers who have gained such expertise should have multiple opportunities and time to fulfill expanded roles and to exercise leadership. Principals and other administrators should recognize, honor, and support teachers in these expanded roles.

6. Induction of Teachers

The induction of novices into teaching is dealt with in a report issued by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. In addition to the induction of novices, every school should organize a substantial, year-long program through which its faculty will introduce new colleagues who are experienced teachers into the philosophy and operation of the particular school and help them refine their practice.

Find Common Ground: Work with the Community to Provide High-Quality Professional Development

To enhance teachers' knowledge and skill so as to serve students more effectively, teachers need partners. Their primary partners are the students' parents. Community, state, and national resources for high-quality professional development are also integral to improving student achievement through teachers' ongoing learning.

Higher education institutions as a whole, as well as schools of education, are major resources for teachers' professional development. These institutions are supported by the public directly through tax revenues, through tax-supported grants and contracts, and in the case of private institutions, through their tax-free status. Higher education and scholarly and scientific societies all benefit directly from such public support because the public believes the advancement of general knowledge is a benefit for all. NFIE urges all higher education institutions and related research societies to recognize the public school teachers of America as a major conduit through which advances in knowledge are transmitted to the public.

Higher education institutions' central mission—to discover and to educate—should include teachers' professional development in all fields and all branches of learning. Teachers and districts should invite higher education institutions to become substantial partners in teachers' professional development in a variety of locally determined ways, and higher education institutions should acknowledge this work as essential to their mission.

In addition, most communities and regions have an array of other resource institutions that are vital to teachers' ongoing learning. These include public and private libraries, museums, historical societies, archaeological and natural sites, arts organizations, businesses, and government resources.

Over the past fifteen years, many of these resource institutions, as well as higher education, have joined with teachers in a host of high- quality professional development partnerships. Few of the programs, however, have survived without grants. Partnerships with academic and cultural institutions need to be more strongly linked both to effective professional development and to changed practice and content in the schools.

To promote high-quality, ongoing, school-based professional development, teachers must recognize the value of these resources, and the resource institutions must recognize their responsibility to teachers. Together, teachers and their partners can create new knowledge and skill that partake both of the world outside the school and build on school-based peer assistance. These two forms of learning and growth are essential to the expanded roles of teachers in modern schools. The recommendations that follow seek to establish new, long-term, and vital partnerships among teachers,

schools, and other educational and cultural agencies for high-quality professional development.

1. Involve Parents, Business, and Community

At the local level, parents, business, and the community should continue to help schools set the vision for students' success and support teachers' learning. Business should provide employees greater time and opportunity to be active partners in teachers' and students' learning. Parents, communities, and business should work in partnership with schools to reach these goals.

2. Community Inventory and Plan

Teachers' organizations should collaborate with districts to invite local leaders to join in conducting an inventory of available local resources and institutions for teachers' professional growth, including higher education, business, cultural, scientific, and other relevant agencies. "Higher education" should be understood to include entire institutions in all fields and branches. Having conducted the inventory, these partnering institutions should prepare a plan to join with teachers and districts for long-term collaboration for teachers' professional development. Districts and schools should support teachers' incorporation of the results of this professional development in instruction. Schools should provide time and opportunity for teachers and parents to become partners in the education of students. States should review local inventories and partnership plans to produce statewide analyses of teachers' access to high-quality resources for professional development. Based on these findings, states should develop plans for assuring that such access is sufficient for all teachers.

3. Establish New or Enhance Existing Partnerships

Many local entities—called teachers' "centers," "academies," "partnerships," "local education funds" or other designations—have been established by districts, states, businesses, higher education, and others over recent years to bring teachers together with other professionals for learning. Each district and state should assure that teachers and resource providers enhance existing entities or establish new ones where teachers, librarians, scholars, scientists, artists, information technology specialists, and others can conduct work they hold and create in common. This work differs both from the profession-building work of peer assistance based in schools, on the one hand, and from scholarship, curatorship, and artistry conducted outside of schools, on the other, and therefore can best flourish in a setting understood to create common ground for both. Each state should assure that partnerships to conduct high-quality professional development, curriculum and assessment development, and the development of technology-based teaching and learning are accessible to all teachers in that state.

4. National Institute

The federal government should establish a national institute for teachers' professional development to support exemplary work that builds the profession. Teachers' organizations should join with specialized associations for educators, scholars, scientists, librarians, museums, and policymakers to develop the national institute.

5. Information Technologies

Local and national partnerships and entities should make information technologies an integral part of their planning and development and should help teachers use these technologies to maximum benefit.

Find the Revenues to Support High-Quality Professional Development

The work ahead must begin with finding out reliably what is already being spent on teachers' professional development, whether it is being spent efficiently, and whether it is adequate to keeping up with change and enabling students to flourish. States and districts should work with community partners and teachers to reallocate existing and appropriate new revenues sufficient to guarantee standards-referenced, quality teaching and learning in every public school. The long-range goal over a period of ten to twenty years should be to rebuild the education system so as to dedicate all work in schools, all management, and all district, state, and federal K-12 education expenditures and activities to improving teaching and learning as measured by suitable standards for student achievement and teaching practice. Interim steps toward this reconception of the teaching job and school organization would include:

1. Identifying Existing Expenditures

States and districts should work with teacher and community organizations to identify current expenditures specifically dedicated to teachers' professional development, reallocate existing expenditures as appropriate to realizing expanded teachers' roles, and determine the needed level of expenditure for professional development to accomplish student success. New or enhanced entities for local partnerships should allocate district and community funds for supporting teachers' professional development.

2. Establishing Appropriate Measures of the Effectiveness of Expenditures

Districts, states, teachers' organizations, and specialized associations should agree on appropriate standards for measuring the effectiveness of public expenditures on professional development.

NFIE will commence at once to support the implementation of these recommendations in model sites throughout the country and invites the profession and the public to join in support of their success.

Sources of the Report

Teachers Take Charge of Their Learning is based on two years of observations, consultations, surveys, and other studies. NFIE research staff conducted extensive site visits and interviewed teachers across the country. Research was conducted in collaboration with other national education research organizations. NFIE led a series of discussions and workshops with teacher leaders, reviewed accounts of exemplary professional development experiences written by teachers, interviewed teachers, and commissioned public focus groups. A national survey of teachers was conducted for NFIE by Washington-based Greenberg Research, Inc. and The Feldman Group with support from the NEA Research Department and NFIE.